Nixon Dedicated Miami Facility

Newly Expanded H

4/8/74

By Ian Glass
Special to The Washington Post

MIAMI, April 7—On Valentine's Day, President Nixon dedicated the $75 million expansion project to the gleaming Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, where patients can order escargots for $2.25 a platter, cherries jubilee for $2.75, and chateaubriand (for two) for $15.

At the time, Mr. Nixon's chief domestic adviser, Kenneth R. Cole Jr., praised the hospital as "the most progressive in the country." And the President personally lauded its operating head, Sanford K. Bronstein.

This weekend, Cedars of Lebanon went into federal bankruptcy court here and won a freeze on its debts while it tries to work out a plan to pay off millions of dollars to hundreds of creditors.

So far, it has managed to meet its 850-employee payroll.

"This is similar," said Alan Greer, a lawyer for the hospital's board of directors," to a football game calling a time out. The hospital simply doesn't have enough cash at the present time to pay all of its current creditors."

Bronstein, who pushed through the 500-bed expansion because he wanted Cedars to be "the Mayo of the South," was unceremoniously fired by the board of directors last weekend.

The expansion had been built over the objections of county health planners who said Miami's metropolitan area already had too many hospital beds, and when Bronstein was toppled, the directors charged "mismanagement."

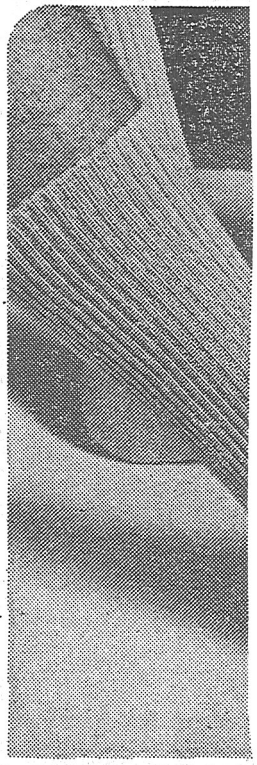
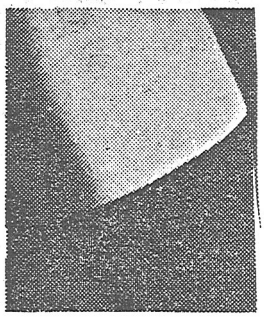
Cedars owes $62 million alone on the federally guaranteed mortgages in its $75 million expansion program. Of more immediate concern, however, is the $13.8 million in defaulted mortgages covering the new, somewhat luxurious north building of the hospital.

The north building is officially called a "patient self-care center," but anyone can check in, without a doctor's note, as if it were a motel.

A Miami reporter rented a room for $22 a night, was handed a key, with a second key that fit the room's medicine cabinet, and got a room with a TV set and a phone with a direct line to a nurse in case of sickness.

When he tried to call the nurse, no one answered.

Only six of the building's 112 rooms were occupied, and



"Gold Cup" hose of Orl
charcoal, burgundy, wh